



PARRA NOTES

Friday, May 13

It's Friday the 13th! But let me not ponder on that further. I hope all you mothers out there had a wonderful weekend. I'm hoping you were all spoiled rotten on your special day.

Saturday was an especially enjoyable day for me. My morning began with the **Delano Cinco de Mayo Parade** where I was joined by 12 youth, including 3 year old **Jaykobe Silva** from **Delano**. **Jaykobe** was sugar free, but had more energy then the Energizer Bunny...makes me appreciate what our mothers do so much more. After the parade I drove over to **Hanford** where I addressed the **Kings Partnership for Children and the Hand in Hand Family Resource Center** on their anniversaries. It was nice to see **Kim Wildey**, **Judy Horn**, **Kings County Supervisor Alene Taylor** and **Clarissa Picazo** from the **Kings County Human Services Agency** at the celebration. In the evening I drove over to **Hanford High School** where I got to perform the coin-toss at the **Hanford/Lemoore Falcons** semi-pro football game. The **Falcons** gave up a heartbreaker, losing **40-39** in overtime. If you haven't been able to catch the **Falcons** in action, be sure to attend their next home game on **Saturday, May 14th**.

While in the **Capitol** on Wednesday, I met with **Wasco City Councilmembers Larry Pearson** and **Danny Espitia**. Later the same day I met with **Gail Egoian**, Transition Program Director for the **Fresno County Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPA)**. Joining us in the meeting were three **Fresno** area parents. The highlight of the day was by far being able to swear in **Bakersfield** farmer **Nazar Kooner** to the **Agriculture Worker Health and Housing Commission**. **Mr. Kooner** was appointed to the commission earlier this year by Speaker of the State Assembly **Fabian Núñez**.

Legislative Update

Today is the last day for policy committees to meet prior to May 31st. Knowing that, I worked hard during the week to ensure that my foster care **Assembly Concurrent Resolution (ACR) 58** was heard before the Assembly Committee on Human Services. I didn't want such an important resolution to be held up any longer. The Committee overwhelmingly approved **ACR 58**. It is now headed to the Assembly Appropriations Committee for further consideration.

ACR 58 Foster Care will recognize the rights of foster youth as critical to ensuring their well-being and future. ACR 58 will also urge the State Departments of Social Services, Education, Mental Health and other designated entities to develop practices to inform foster youth of their rights and available resources

ASSEMBLY BUDGET SUB 4 COMMITTEE

For those of you that might be unaware, parental child abductions are a major problem. In **Fresno County** alone, there were **26 interstate** and **6 international** abduction cases last year. Imagine being one of those parents. Imagine feeling that you will never see your child again. I can't think of anything more painful for a parent to have to go through.

Over the past few months I have been working with the Budget Committee to ensure that funding was not cut for county run **Child Recovery and Reduction Units**. These units are responsible for recovering a child who has been abducted by a custodian.

Unfortunately, the administration has proposed to repeal the mandate that would fund this program. The good news is that the Assembly Budget Sub 4 Committee has voted to not eliminate this mandate. The State Senate has failed to do the same and as a result, this issue will now be reviewed by a **Conference Committee** made up of both State Senators and Assembly Members. I will continue to keep you posted on this matter.

ASSEMBLY BUDGET SUB 5 COMMITTEE –HIGH SPEED RAIL

The Assembly Budget Sub 5 Committee is responsible for looking at the state transportation budget and approving it once needed adjustments have been made. On Wednesday, I addressed this committee in an effort to encourage them to allocate funds for a study that will explore the creation of a high speed rail stop between **Fresno** and **Bakersfield**. Present at the hearing were **Mayor of Visalia Bob Link**, **Vice Mayor Jesus Gamboa** and **Council Member Walter Deissler**. Also present were **Leland Bergstrom**, **Mayor of Kingsburg** and **Tulare Council Member Carlton Jones**.

I am thrilled to report that the committee approved \$325,000 for the study. The **City of Visalia** on Monday pledged to contribute \$50,000. The rest of the money will be generated by local entities. The study is expected to cost a total of \$650,000. We are now waiting for the State Senate to approve the funding.

Other Highlights

FOSTER CARE CONFERENCE

On **July 9th** I will be hosting a Foster Care Conference in **Bakersfield**. Joining me will be several organizations who will inform foster care youth and parents of available resources and rights. For more information please contact Juan Cerda at my Bakersfield District office at (661) 334-3745 or by e-mail at Juan.Cerda@asm.ca.gov.

HEALTH ADVISORY GROUP

The **Office of Statewide Planning and Development** has offered to participate in a conference call with members of my Health Advisory Group and anyone else interested to inform us on the various services their agency offers. If you are interested in participating please contact **Frank Stiger** at (559) 585-7170 or by e-mail at Frank.Stiger@asm.ca.gov

SUMMER INTERNS WANTED

I am presently accepting applications for my summer internship program in my Hanford and Bakersfield district offices. Candidates should be residents of the 30th Assembly District, possess solid research and communication skills, have a strong interest in public policy and political issues facing the Central Valley.

Applications can be found at <http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a30>. The application deadline is May 20th for summer interns. For more details, please contact Jeff Forbes at the Hanford office at (559) 585-7170 or by e-mail at jeff.forbes@asm.ca.gov . For Bakersfield office internships please contact Manuel Barrera at (661) 334-3745 or by e-mail at Manuel.Barrera@asm.ca.gov

GRANTS

Beginning late June my office will be distributing grant packages. Included in the package will be information regarding, state, federal and private grants. For more information please contact Jeff Forbes at (559) 585-7170 or by e-mail at jeff.forbes@asm.ca.gov .

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